

identical to what the House passed earlier this year, doubling the standard deduction for joint filers to twice that of singles. That will help those who do not itemize their taxes who suffer the marriage tax penalty, essentially wiping it out for every one of them.

We also widen the 15 percent bracket so joint filers can earn twice as much as single filers in the 15 percent tax bracket. The benefit of that is that means if one is an itemizer, someone who owns a home, and most middle class family do, that is why they itemize their taxes, they, too, will see their marriage tax penalty eliminated.

There are some on the other side and those at the White House who say, well, maybe we will do a little marriage tax relief, and we will just help those who do not itemize. So they are saying if one owns a home and is married and suffers the marriage tax penalty, that is tough. Bill Clinton, AL GORE, want them to continue suffering the marriage tax penalty.

Madam Speaker, I believe there is a need to help everyone who suffers the marriage tax penalty, whether they own a home or not, whether they itemize their taxes or not.

We have a great opportunity this week, Madam Speaker. I invite every Democrat to join with every Republican in voting to eliminate the marriage tax penalty. Think what it means to young couples like Shad and Michelle Hallihan, two hard-working public school teachers from Joliet, Illinois, who, because they chose to live together in holy matrimony and chose to join together in marriage, now suffer the marriage tax penalty. We are going to help them by eliminating the marriage tax penalty.

Madam Speaker, I want to invite everyone in this House to join together in helping good people like Shad and Michelle Hallihan. Let us do it. Let us eliminate the marriage tax penalty. Let us do it in a bipartisan way. I hope this time the President will sign it into law.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 38 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Eternal God, source of all authority under the heavens, and true Spirit who governs the world, renew us in Your image and make us a holy Nation.

Help young and old alike to comply to the laws of this land and offer respect to all who hold positions of rightful authority.

May Your Spirit stir in each human heart a gracious freedom that chooses to obey. May people everywhere embrace laws which assure good order and protect the life and liberty of all.

Give all lawmakers, this day, prudence and wisdom so that citizens may see Your holy will in true governance, both in good times and in bad times. For You live and govern now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause I, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 30, 2000.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted to Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on June 30, 2000 at 1:25 p.m.

S. 148: That the Senate Agreed to House amendment.

H.R. 4425: That the Senate Agreed to conference report.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAH, L,
Clerk of the House.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the Speaker signed the following enrolled bill on Friday, June 30, 2000:

H.R. 4425, making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

And the Speaker pro tempore signed the following enrolled bill on Tuesday, July 4, 2000:

S. 148, to require the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program to provide assistance in the conservation of neotropical migratory birds.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBER TO ABRAHAM LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to Section 5(a) of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act (36 U.S.C. 101 note) and the order of the House of Thursday, June 29, 2000, the Speaker on Friday, June 30, 2000, appointed the following member on the part of the House to the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission to fill the existing vacancy thereon:

Ms. Lura Lynn Ryan, Kankakee, Illinois.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, June 27, 2000.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Enclosed please find copies of resolutions approved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on June 21, 2000, in accordance with 40 U.S.C. §606.

With warm regards, I remain
Sincerely,

BUD SHUSTER,
Chairman.

There was no objection.

GAS PRICES SKYROCKET BECAUSE OF ADMINISTRATION

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Madam Speaker, every American with a car cannot help but notice how gas prices are skyrocketing out of control. Before summer began, the Clinton-Gore administration released a report showing that Americans could be paying as much as \$1.80 a gallon for gas by this summer.

But, lo and behold, the Clinton Administration is no better at predicting gas prices than they are at protecting our Nation's most classified nuclear secrets. In many Midwest and Western States, prices so far are higher than \$1.80; how about \$2.35 a gallon and rising?

Vice President GORE, now touting his risky scheme to cut gas taxes, seems to forget that in 1993 he cast the tie-

breaking vote to increase gas taxes, adding to the tax burden of seniors and working families in this country.

When it comes to keeping gas prices reasonable, the Clinton-Gore administration has failed the American people; and now, unfortunately, the American people are paying at the pump for this administration's mistake.

SUPREME COURT DECISIONS CONFUSING AMERICA

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Madam Speaker, the courts have struck again. First, it is now perfectly legal to jab scissors into the brain of a full-term baby being delivered until the baby dies; second, Internet pornography is now perfectly legal, even for kids.

Think about it. The courts have ruled Communists can work in our defense plants, full-term babies can be killed, pornography, even for kids, is legal; but you cannot pray in school.

Beam me up. No wonder America is confused and screwed up.

I yield back the brains of these judges that evidently they have been sitting on for a long time.

TAX RELIEF FOR MARRIED AMERICANS

(Mr. WELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELLER. Madam Speaker, let me ask a basic question of fundamental fairness: Is it right, is it fair, that under our Tax Code, 25 million married working couples on average pay \$1,400 more in taxes just because they are married?

Is it right that under our Tax Code that a husband and wife who are both in the workforce are forced to pay higher taxes if they choose to get married and the only way to avoid the marriage tax penalty is either to get divorced or just not get married?

Madam Speaker, that is wrong, and I am so proud this House of Representatives passed overwhelmingly legislation to wipe out the marriage tax penalty for 25 million married working couples. This week we are going to pass legislation, agreement with the House and Senate, which will wipe out the marriage tax penalty for 25 million married working couples. I was proud to see that every House Republican supported H.R. 6, and 48 Democrats broke with their leadership to support our efforts.

I want to extend an invitation to my Democratic friends on other side of the aisle to join with us and make it a bipartisan effort to eliminate the marriage tax penalty. It is unfair; it is wrong. It is wrong to tax marriage. Let us eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that she will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF EDUCATION IN UNITED STATES HISTORY

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 129) expressing the sense of Congress regarding the importance and value of education in United States history.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. CON. RES. 129

Whereas basic knowledge of United States history is essential to full and informed participation in civic life and to the larger vibrancy of the American experiment in self-government;

Whereas basic knowledge of the past serves as a civic glue, binding together a diverse people into a single Nation with a common purpose;

Whereas citizens who lack knowledge of United States history will also lack an understanding and appreciation of the democratic principles that define and sustain the Nation as a free people, such as liberty, justice, tolerance, government by the consent of the governed, and equality under the law;

Whereas a recent Roper survey done for the American Council of Trustees and Alumni reveals that the next generation of American leaders and citizens is in danger of losing America's civic memory;

Whereas the Roper survey found that 81 percent of seniors at elite colleges and universities could not answer basic high school level questions concerning United States history, that scarcely more than half knew general information about American democracy and the Constitution, and that only 22 percent could identify the source of the most famous line of the Gettysburg Address;

Whereas many of the Nation's colleges and universities no longer require United States history as a prerequisite to graduation, including 100 percent of the top institutions of higher education;

Whereas 78 percent of the Nation's top colleges and universities no longer require the study of any form of history;

Whereas America's colleges and universities are leading bellwethers of national priorities and values, setting standards for the whole of the United States' education system and sending signals to students, teachers, parents, and public schools about what every educated citizen in a democracy must know;

Whereas many of America's most distinguished historians and intellectuals have expressed alarm about the growing historical illiteracy of college and university graduates and the consequences for the Nation; and

Whereas the distinguished historians and intellectuals fear that without a common civic memory and a common understanding

of the remarkable individuals, events, and ideals that have shaped the Nation, people in the United States risk losing much of what it means to be an American, as well as the ability to fulfill the fundamental responsibilities of citizens in a democracy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the historical illiteracy of America's college and university graduates is a serious problem that should be addressed by the Nation's higher education community;

(2) boards of trustees and administrators at institutions of higher education in the United States should review their curricula and add requirements in United States history;

(3) State officials responsible for higher education should review public college and university curricula in their States and promote requirements in United States history;

(4) parents should encourage their children to select institutions of higher education with substantial history requirements and students should take courses in United States history whether required or not; and

(5) history teachers and educators at all levels should redouble their efforts to bolster the knowledge of United States history among students of all ages and to restore the vitality of America's civic memory.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on S. Con. Res. 129.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 129, which is identical to House Concurrent Resolution 366, a resolution introduced in the House before the Independence Day recess.

I would like first to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), the House majority leader, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), chairman of the House Committee on Education and Workforce, whose cooperation has expedited the consideration of this resolution. I would also like to thank Senators LIEBERMAN and GORTON for their support of this resolution and commend the Senate for passing it on the Friday before the 4th of July holiday.

I am pleased to be here today with my colleague from California as cosponsor to offer this resolution to draw attention to the troubling historical illiteracy of our Nation's next generation of leaders. Senate Concurrent Resolution 129 expresses the sense of Congress regarding the importance and value of education in American history.